WHIRRAKEE

December 2002 Vol. 23 No. 11

Registered by Australia Post. Publication No. VBH4462

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE BENDIGO FIELD NATURALISTS CLUB

Bendigo Field Naturalists Club Inc.

Address for correspondence: PO Box 396, Bendigo 3552

Office Bearers for 2002 - 2003

President	Rob Moors	Mandurang South Rd.	5439 6254
Senior Vice President	Matthew Comer	46 Railway Place, Goornong	5432 2380
Junior Vice President	position not filled		
Secretary	Bill Holsworth	13 Nabilla Crs, Bendigo	5443 4063
Minute Secretary	Jan Orr	2 Cockerel Court, Bendigo	5443 5668
Treasurer	Glenise Moors	Mandurang South Rd. Sedgwick	5439 6254
Membership Officer	Kate Lottkowitz	80 Piccaninny Rd, RSD Strathfieldsaye	5439 3157
Excursion organiser	John Green	4/34 Eaglehawk Rd, Bendigo	5443 6756
Syllabus organiser	Rod Orr	2 Cockerel Court, Bendigo	5443 5668
Librarian	Diana Collier	31 Milroy Street, Bendigo	5443 0137
Garden Convenor/Secretary	Matthew Comer	46 Railway Place, Goornong	5432 2380
Hall Management	Bill Holsworth	13 Nabilla Crs, Bendigo	5443 4063
Whirrakee contact	Sabine Wilkens	82 Somerville Street, Bendigo e-mail: s.wilkens@bendigo.latrobe.edu.au	5443 2797

Membership of the Bendigo Field Naturalists Club is open to all those interested in Natural History. The subscription rates are: Single $34; Family $40; Concession: Single $28.50; Family $34. *Whirrakee* subscription only is $34. These rates include GST.

General meetings are held on the second Wednesday of each month. The venue for General meetings is the Golden Square Senior Citizens Building, Old High Street, Golden Square. The invited speaker at general meetings starts at 8:00pm and meetings conclude with supper.
If a workshop is held prior to the meeting, it will be advertised and it usually starts at 7.00pm.
The Annual Meeting is held in September.

Committee meetings are held on the third Wednesday of each month at 7:30pm. Members of the Committee are the Office Bearers listed above, together with the following members: Barbara Pelczynska, Bob Ruddick, Maurie Stone, Stuart Fraser.

Excursions Excursions are conducted irregularly and are advertised on the diary page of the *Whirrakee*. The assembly point for excursions is the Golden Square Senior Citizens Building, unless otherwise specified. In addition to local excursions, campouts are held several times each year, usually coinciding with long weekends or holiday periods.

The Bendigo Field Naturalists Club has two active sub-groups:

Fauna Study Group: meets on the fourth Wednesday of the month at 7:30pm in the Golden Square Senior Citizens Building.

Chairman: John Burtonclay, Fadersons Lane, Mandurang (5439 5710)
Secretary: Bill Holsworth, 13 Nabilla Crs., Bendigo (5443 4063)
Equipment Officer: Maurie Lewis (0407 427179)

Bird Observers Group: meets on the first Wednesday of the month at 7.30pm in the Golden Square Senior Citizen Building.

Front Cover:

Photographer: Barbara Pelczynska / Trish Pilling

The photo shows Stan Pelczynski working in the BFNC garden at a September working bee...or is it Father Christmas?

WHIRRAKEE

Monthly Newsletter of the Bendigo Field Naturalist Club

Vol. 23, No. 11, December 2002

Whirrakee takes its name from the Whirrakee Wattle (*Acacia williamsonii*) which is virtually endemic to the Bendigo region

CONTENT

Item	Contributor	Page
Between now and Christmas....		3
Bird Observation at Carnie's Reserve	Alf Howe	4
BFNC November workshop: Botanical Names	Rod Orr	4
BFNC garden plants - what do their names mean?	Rod Orr	7
A Swift Parrot Story	Ruth Brozek	9
Call for Volunteers		11
WRIN news	Garry Cheers	11
October General Meeting: Speaker Neil Marriot Topic: Grevillea Hunting in Australia	Sabine Wilkens	12
VFNCA March long weekend campout	VFNCA	13

Authors are responsible for the accuracy of the information they use and also for any opinions expressed in their articles.
Contributions will be included as soon as possible after they are received, although articles received more than one week after the monthly General Meeting will probably be too late for inclusion in the next issue of *Whirrakee*.
Articles in *Whirrakee* may be reproduced, but permission should be obtained from the Bendigo Field Naturalists Club, and acknowledgment should be given to the author and the Club. Some back issues are still available on request.

Editor's note
The truly 'Fabulous Fabaceae' key printed in the last Whirrakee did not suffer too much from the fact that it had to be cut in half for printing. However a few words got lost in the centre of the double page.....in case you have not worked these out, they are (from the top down): "flowers red, pink purple or mauve", "flowers pink, mauve or purple", "central of 3 leaflets is on a stalk", "Glycine", "standard petal", "keel containing sexy bit", "front view" and "side view". Thanks again to Frances for making this key available to our members.

There are three social gatherings before Christmas (se page 3), I hope you can make it to as many as possible.
I also hope everybody will have a safe and peaceful Christmas. As usual, I am out of all photos and articles, so please send in material for the first edition of the year which comes out in February.

Between now and Christmas.....

An Invitation to all Club Members & Friends
to the *Annual BFNC Christmas Dinner*

6.30 pm Wednesday 11 December
at Bendigo Field Naturalists Rooms
Old High St, Golden Square

(as usual, please bring salad,
casserole or dessert)

the CD-ROM
"Plants and Animals of the Box-Ironbark area of Central Victoria"
will be available for sale at a special discounted price to members.
A demonstration of the CD will be part of the Christmas dinner activities.

Clean up of Clubrooms

This yearly (very social) event will be on
Saturday, 14th December, starting at 9am.
Stay as long as you like but the whole job should be finished by noon.
Please bring gloves rags and dusters and whatever else you think will be needed.

Christmas lunch meeting at Jack Ipsen's
Sunday, December 15

Jack is expecting our members again this year for the annual Christmas picnic meeting at his property at Lyel Glen near Redesdale.
Please bring all your food and drink as well as a chair (if you need one).
There are plenty of interesting things to see before you sit down for lunch.
Please contact a committee member if you need instructions how to get there.

Bird Observations at Carnie's Reserve – October 31, 2002
Author: Alf Howe

Bullock Creek was dry; Yellow Box trees were heavy with blossom.
Birds seen were:

Red-rumped Parrot
Galah
Noisy Miner
Willie Wagtail
Kookaburra
Magpie
Brown Treecreeper
Striated Pardalote
Whistling Kite
White-plumed Honeyeater
Grey-crowned Babbler (12 birds)
Eastern Rosella
Brown Falcon
Dollar-bird
Restless Flycatcher
Magpie-lark
Pied Butcher-bird
Superb Fairy-wren
Australian Raven
White-winged Triller

I ran out of legs and so only did the West side of the Creek.

Bendigo Field Naturalists' Club November Workshop - Botanical Names

Author: Rod Orr

What do scientific names tell you?
Decoding botanical names - what do they mean?

Introduction
Some general hints
* two places to look for meaning (Genus; species); Family names also make sense!
* names often commemorate people (eg. Wilson; Gunn; Mueller; Davies...) indicated by some word endings - look for (Genus: -ei; -ea;-ia; species: -ii; -iana)
* descriptive names
looking for meaning - what is being described?
plant parts are commonly described or compared (-oid; oides)
especially the flower; floral parts; leaves; fruits; seeds; stems
some qualities are commonly described, eg. colour; growth form; hairiness; texture; odour
what do the separate parts of a botanical name mean (eg. leuco-xylon)?
notice special beginnings & endings of names (macro; micro; flora; folia etc.)

Common names & common sense - well-chosen descriptive common names may be very stable (and memorable) despite changes to botanical names.

Activities (using the list of plants in our garden)
1 Underline the botanical names which appear to be derived from names of people (or places)
2 Suggest what the name of each person(or place) might have been
3 Consider the list of plants in our garden and decode their botanical names

Acacia	Akis=a sharp point (*Akakia arabica* - African Thorn-bush)
acinacea	acinac=a short sword
Agrostis	Agrostis=grass
Allocasuarina	Allos=other; Casuarina=like a cassowary
alpina	Alpinus=mountainous
amara	amar=bitter
apiculatum	apiculum=a short point
appressa	appressa=lying flat against
arcuata	arcuate=arching
Arthropodium	Arthron=a joint; podium=a foot
aspalathoides	aspalath=a sweet-scented shrub; oides=like
aspera	asper=rough
australis	Australis=the South land
Austrodanthonia	Austro=Australian; danthonia: AF de Candolle (1805) after Etienne Danthoine; French Botanist of Marseilles
Austrostipa	Austro=Australian; stipa=the coarse part of Flax/feathery inflorescence
avenacea	avena=Oats
behriana/behrii	Comm. Behr
brachybotrya	brachy=short; botryo=bunch (of grapes)
Brachyloma	Brachys=short; loma=edge/fringe

Bracteantha Bract=modified leaf; anther=pollen producing structure
Brunonia JE Smith (1811) after R Brown FLS (1773-1858) the most famous British botanist who described the Australian flora
Bursaria Bursa=a purse
Callitris Kalos=beauty; trichos=hair
Calytrix kalyx=cup; trichos=hair
Carex Carex=sedge
Cassinia R. Brown (1817) after Count Alexandre Henri Gabriel de Cassini (1782-1832) a French specialist in the Compositae (now Asteraceae)
Chrysocephalum Chrysos=gold; cephalum=head
ciliata ciliate=with small hairs
cinerascens cineraceus=ash-greyish
clandestina clandestina=hidden; invisible flowers
crassifolia crass=thick; folia=leaves
Cryptandra Kryptos=hidden; andros=anthers(hood-shaped petals enclose anthers)
daphnoides daphn=Laurel or Bay
Daviesia JE Smith (1798) after Rev. Hugh Davies FLS (1739-1821)
decurrens/decurrrent de=from,down,out; curr=running
decussata decussate=crossed (pairs of leaves)
Dianella Diana ('Goddess of the chase'); ella=small
Dillwynia JE Smith (1805) afer Lewis Weston Dillwyn FLS, FRS(1778-1855)
Dodonaea Phillip Miller (1754) after Rembert Dodoens (1517-1585); Professor of Medicine, Univ of Leyden.
Dryophylla dryo=oak; phyll=a leaf
elatus elat=high/lofty
elegantissima elegan=elegant/fine; -issima=very?
Erodium Erodium=a heron (Heron's-bill)
Eucalyptus Eu=well; kalyptos=covered (the cap covering the stamens in the bud)
exutiacies exutus=stripped off/cast off/shed
festivum festivum=?
froggattii Comm. Froggatt
Galium Galium=the Bedstraw
gaudichaudii Comm. Gaudichaud
geniculata geniculata=bent
geniculata geniculate=kneed/bent
genistifolia genista=broom; folia=leaf
Geranium Geranium=a crane (Crane's-bill)
Gliscrocaryon Gliscro=sticky; caryon=nut
Glycine glykys=sweet
Gonocarpus gon=angle; carpus=fruit
Goodenia JE Smith (1793) after Rev. Samuel Goodenough FLS, FRS(1743-1827) Bishop of Carlisle
gracilenta gracil=slender; -enta=very?
gracilis gracil=slender
graminifolium gramini=grass-like; folium=leaf
Grevillea R Brown (1809) after Charles Francis Greville (1749-1809) a founder of the Royal Horticultural Society, London.
Hakea Schrader (1797) after Baron Christian Ludwig von Hake (1745-1818) a German patron of Botany and a Councillor of Hanover.
Hardenbergia Bentham (1837) after Franziska von Hardenberg, sister of Baron Carl von Huegel (175-1870)
Hibbertia Andrews (1800) after George Hibbert(1757-1837) a London merchant who had a private botanic garden in Chelsea.
humilis humil=low
implexa implex=twisted
incana incan=hoary/grey
Indigofera Indigo (Indigo dye - violet-blue); fero=I bear
jaceoides jace=?; -oides=resembles
lanceolata lanceolata=lance-like
lanigera lani=wool
largiflorens largi=many; florens=flowers
laterale lateral=from or at the side of
Lepidosperma Lepidos=a scale; sperma=seed
leptophylla Leptos=slender; phylla=leaves
Leptorhynchos Leptos=slender; rhynchos=snout
Leptospermum Leptos=slender; sperma=seed
Leucopogon Leukos=white; pogon=beard
leucoxylon leuco-xylon; Leukos=white; xylo=wood
linifolia linear=parallel leaf margins; folia=leaves
linkii Comm. Link
Linum Linum=flax
Lomandra Loma=edge/border; andra=anther
luehmannii Comm. Luehman
marginale margin=border/edge
Melaleuca Melos=black (trunk); leukos=white (branches)
Micromyrtis Mikros=small; Myrtus=myrtle
Microseris Mikros=small; seris=chicory, lettuce or endive

mollis	mollis=soft
monogyna	mono=one/single; gyna=female (ovary)
montana	montan=mountain-dwelling
multiflora	multi=many; flora=flower
myrsinoides	myrsin=the Myrtle; oides=like
obcordatus	obcordate=leaf shape
Olearia	Olea=olive
osswaldii	Comm. F Osswald (a German plant collector from SA)
Ozothamnos	Ozo=to smell; thamnos=shrub (fragrant shrub)
paradoxa	paradox=incredible/marvellous
Parahebe	Para=like; Hebe (named after the Goddess of youth)
pedunculata	pedunculate=stemmed
Pelargonium	pelargos=a stork (stork's-bill)
perfoliata	per=through; folia=leaves
Phebalium	Phebale=a kind of Myrtle (flowers are similar to myrtaceous plants)
Philotheca	Philos=loving: theke=a box (capsule)
physocarpa	physo=bladder; air sac; bubble; carpa=fruit
pilosa	pilos=hairy
Pimelea	pimele`=soft fat/lard (oily seeds)
Poa	Poa=grass
Podolepis	Podos=foot; lepis=a scale
polyanthemos	poly=many; anthemos =anthers
polybractea	poly=many; bract=modified leaf at base of peduncle (flower stalk)
Prostanthera	Prostheke=an appendage; anthera=anther (appendage on anthers)
Pultenaea	JE Smith after Richard Pulteney MD, FLS, FRS (1730-1801). Botanist-Surgeon who wrote 'Flora Anglica' (unpubl)
pycnantha	pycn=thick/dense; antha=anthers
quadridentatus	quad=four; dentatus=toothed
racemosa	racem=a cluster
revoluta	revolut=rolled back
rodneyanum	rodney=?; -anum=possessed by
rosmarinifolia	rosmarini=rosemary-like; folia=leaf
scabra	scabra=rough
semipapposum	semi=half; pappus=grandfather; down; fuzz
Senecio	Senex=an old man
setacea	seta=a bristle
spinosa	spinos=spiny
squamatus	squama-scales
stenophylla	stenos=narrow; phylla=leaves
Stackhousia	JE Smith (1798) after John Stackhouse FLS(1742-1819), a Cornish botanist (seaweeds), and botanical artist
stricta/strictum	strictum=drawn together; tight; very upright; very straight
Stylidium	stylos=style; idium - stamens united with the style forming a column
Templetonia	R Brown(1812) after John Templeton(1766-1825) Belfast NHS 'A Catalogue of the Plants of Ireland'; 'Flora Hibernica'.
tephrosperma	tephro=grey/ash coloured; sperma=seeds
teretifolia	terete=narrowly cylindrical; folia=leaves
tetragona	tetra=four; gona=angles/corners
tetragynus	tetra=four; gynus=ovary chambers
Tetratheca	tetra=four; theke= box/seed-box (anthers are 4-lobed/4-celled)
Themeda	Themeda=a depression, wet in Winter but dry in Summer
triandra	tri=three; andra=anthers
tricarpa	tri=three; carpos=fruit
tubuliflora	tubuli=a little pipe; flora=flowers
ulicifolia	ulex=gorse; folia=leaf
uncata	uncus=ending in a hook
uncinata	uncinat=hooked (at leaf-tip?)
verrucosa	verruca=wart-like growths or swellings
violacea	viola=violet
virgatus	virga=twigs
viridis	green
viscosa	viscosa=sticky/viscous
Wahlenbergia	HA Schrader (1821) after Goran Wahlenberg MD(1780-1851); Swedish Professor of Medicine & Botany, Univ of Uppsala.
Westringia	JE Smith (1797) after Dr Johan Petrus Westring (1753-1833)Swedish Lichen expert; Physician to the King of Sweden.
williamsonii	Comm. Williamson (ii)
wilsonii	Comm. Wilson (ii)

4 Describe some actual plants (BFNC garden) & try to invent sensible common names

References for further information (because this is just the tip of the proverbial iceberg)

Baines, JA. *Australian Plant Genera*; NSW:SGAP; 1981

Borror, DJ. *Dictionary of Word Roots and Combining Forms*; California:Mayfield; 1988

Debenham, C. *The Language of Botany*; SGAP

Neal, W. *Gardener's Latin*; London:Robert Hale; 1992

Stearne, WT. *Botanical Latin*; GB:David & Charles; 1991

Every good botanical reference has an extensive Glossary - these are very useful!

Bendigo Field Naturalists Club - Garden Plants (incomplete list)
- after digesting the previous article, you can now work out what their names actually mean....

Family	Botanical name	Common name
Monocotyledons		
Cyperaceae	*Carex appressa*	Tall Sedge
	Lepidosperma laterale	Variable Sword-sedge
Liliaceae	*Arthropodium strictum*	Chocolate Lily
	Dianella revoluta	Black-anther Flax-lily
Poaceae	*Agrostis avenacea*	Blown Grass
	Austrodanthonia linkii	Wallaby Grass
	Austrodanthonia pilosa	Velvet Wallaby Grass
	Austrodanthonia racemosa	Slender Wallaby Grass
	Austrodanthonia setacea	Small-flowered Wallaby Grass
	Poa sieberiana	Tussock Grass
	Austrostipa elegantissima	Elegant Spear Grass
	Austrostipa mollis	Spear Grass
	Austrostipa scabra	Rough Spear Grass
	Themeda triandra	Kangaroo Grass
Xanthorrhoeaceae	*Lomandra multiflora*	Many-flowered Mat-rush
Dicotyledons		
Asteraceae	*Bracteantha viscosa*	Sticky Everlasting
	Cassinia arcuata	Drooping Cassinia
	Cassinia uncata	Sticky Cassinia
	Chrysocephalum apiculatum	Common Everlasting
	Chrysocephalum semipapposum	Clustered Everlasting
	Leptorhynchos squamatus	Scaly Buttons
	Microseris lanceolata	Yam Daisy
	Olearia teretifolia	Cypress Daisy-bush
	Olearia tubuliflora	Rayless Daisy-bush
	Olearia decurrens	Clammy Daisy-bush
	Ozothamnus obcordatus	Grey Everlasting
	Podolepis jaceoides	Showy Podolepis
	Senecio quadridentatus	Cotton Fireweed
Brunoniaceae	*Brunonia australis*	Pin Cushions
Campanulaceae	*Wahlenbergia gracilenta*	Annual Bluebell
	Wahlenbergia gracilis	Bluebell
	Wahlenbergia stricta	Tall Bluebell
Casuarinaceae	*Allocasuariana muelleriana*	Slaty Sheoak
	Allocasuarina luehmannii	Buloke
Dilleniaceae	*Hibbertia exutiacies*	Prickly Guinea-flower
	Hibbertia incana	Guinea-flower
Epacridaceae	*Brachyloma daphnoides*	Daphne Heath
	Leucopogon virgatus	Common Beard-heath
Fabaceae	*Daviesia ulicifolia*	Gorse Bitter Pea
	Daviesia genistiolia	Broom Bitter Pea
	Daviesia leptophylla	Slender Bitter Pea
	Dillwynia cinerascens	Grey Parrot Pea
	Glycine clandestina	Twining Glycine
	Hardenbergia violacea	Purple Coral Pea
	Indigofera australis	Austral Indigo

	Pultenaea largiflorens	Bush Pea
	Pultenaea pedunculata	Matted Bush Pea
	Templetonia stenopyhlla	Leafy Templetonia
Geraniaceae	*Pelargonium rodneyanum*	Magenta Storks-bill
Goodeniaceae	*Goodenia geniculata*	Bent Goodenia
Haloragaceae	*Gliscrocaryon behrii*	Golden Pennants
	Gonocarpus elatus	Tall Raspwort
	Gonocarpus tetragynus	Common Raspwort
Lamiaceae	*Prostanthera aspalathoides*	Scarlet Mint Bush
	Westringia crassifolia	Whipstick Westringia
Linaceae	*Linum marginale*	Native Flax
Mimosaceae	*Acacia acinacea*	Gold-dust Wattle
	Acacia aspera	Rough Wattle
	Acacia brachybotrya	Grey Mulga
	Acacia genistifolia	Spreading Wattle
	Acacia implexa	Lightwood
	Acacia lanigera	Woolly Wattle
	Acacia montana	Mallee Wattle
	Acacia osswaldii	Umbrella Wattle
	Acacia paradoxa	Hedge Wattle
	Acacia pycnantha	Golden Wattle
	Acacia williamsonii	Whirrakee Wattle
Myrtaceae	*Calytrix tetragona*	Common Fringe-myrtle
	Eucalyptus behriana	Bull Mallee
	Eucalyptus froggattii	Kamarooka Mallee
	Eucalyptus leucoxylon	Yellow Gum
	Eucalyptus polyanthemos	Red Box
	Eucalyptus polybractea	Blue Mallee
	Eucalyptus tricarpa	Red Ironbark
	Eucalyptus viridis	Green Mallee
	Leptospermum myrsinoides	Silky Teatree
	Leptospermum lanigerum	Heath Teatree
	Melaleuca decussata	Totem Poles
	Melaleuca uncinata	Broom Honey-myrtle
	Melaleuca wilsonii	Violet Honey-myrtle
	Micromyrtus ciliata	Heath Myrtle
Pittosporaceae	*Bursaria spinosa*	Sweet Bursaria
Proteaceae	*Grevillea alpina*	Cat's Claws
	Grevillea dryophylla	Goldfields Grevillea
	Grevillea rosmarinifolia	Rosemary Grevillea
	Hakea decurrens	Silky Hakea
Rhamnaceae	*Cryptandra amara*	Bitter Cryptandra
Rubiaceae	*Galium gaudichaudii*	Rough Bedstraw
Rutaceae	*Phebalium festivum*	Dainty Phebalium
	Philotheca verrucosa	Fairy Waxflower
Scrophulariaceae	*Parahebe perfoliata*	Diggers Speedwell
Stackhousiaceae	*Stackhousia monogyna*	Creamy Stackhousia
Stylidiaceae	*Stylidium graminifolium*	Grass Trigger-plant
Thymelaeaceae	*Pimelea humilis*	Common Rice-flower
	Pimelea linifolia	Slender Rice-flower
Tremandraceae	*Tetratheca ciliata*	Pink Bells

A Swift Parrot Story

Author: Ruth Brozek 'Tasman Nature Guiding'

Spring 2001 saw a massive flowering of Tasmanian Blue Gum (*Eucalyptus globulus*) in the South East of Tasmania. The big trees fringing the shoreline near my Eaglehawk Neck home were in bloom from late August to mid December. All day the resident New Holland honeyeaters and Little and Yellow Wattlebirds revelled in the feast. But it was the presence of a small flock of Swift Parrots that held my attention. It was a neck-cricking exercise to see these beautiful little parrots as they constantly moved around in the leafy canopy collecting nectar with their brush-tipped tongues, and almost impossible to sight them through binoculars as they sped across our property en route to their nesting and roosting territory.

I knew these birds were listed as Endangered under the Tasmanian Threatened Species Protection Act 1995, and similarly under Commonwealth and other States' legislation. They are a small, long-tailed green parrot with red face and underwings, which moves between Tasmania where they breed during Spring and Summer, and the South Eastern quarter of the Mainland where they move about in response to local eucalypt flowering events during Autumn and Winter. In both regions they find the forests and woodlands in which they forage, breed and roost fragmented and diminished due to that greatest of threats, habitat destruction. There may be less than 1000 breeding pairs, and it is possible that this will decline further, although a recovery plan has been in action for several years and some progress has been made towards habitat conservation.

When the Swift Parrots arrive in Tasmania their favourite Blue Gums may not have commenced flowering, and the parrots rely on Black Gum (*E. ovata*) blossom. Black Gum forest in Tasmania is down to about 5% of its pre-1803 extent, as it grew on the best sites for farming. Blue Gum forest grows on the dolerite soils of the East and South East. The timber is excellent for many purposes...historically for ship building and wharf piles, currently for building timbers and firewood (East Coast firewood is much sought after).....and much is being converted into woodchips for export, due to the current forestry practice of clearfelling and burning coupes. Often these coupes are replanted with Blue Gums, because they are a fast growing species able to be harvested in less than 80 years. Although they will bloom during their short lives and could provide food for the parrots, the flowering will not be as prolific as it is on older, wide-crowned trees, so there will be less food available. Recent research indicates that Swift Parrots prefer the largest trees on the most fertile sites, and ignore what appear to humans to be perfectly suitable Swift Parrot foraging areas.

The Swift Parrots, like most birds, do not nest in their foraging trees, but in hollows of other eucalypt species such as Stringybark (*E. obliqua*) and White Peppermint (*E. pulchella*) as well as Blue Gums. Hollows of suitable size for nesting do not usually form in trees until they are at least 80 years old, and there are other creatures which require tree hollows..... Eastern Rosellas, Pardalotes, even possums, as well as introduced Kookaburras and Starlings. All the known nesting sites occur in shrubby or grassy dry forests within 8 kilometres of the coast. This is the coast we flock to in summer and which is constantly subjected to subdivision, clearing and development.

It's a hard life being a Swift Parrot, having to fly in over treacherous Bass Strait and re-establish your place in the forest, which may have grown considerably smaller in your absence. Blue Gum itself can be a fickle partner, going over the top with massive flowering one year, and then producing just a trickle of blossoms for the next few years. You might have to move to the city and make the most of the remaining trees, usually mainland species of flowering gums planted during the native gardening era of the 1970s and 80s. In the city there are dangers such as moving vehicles, tall wire mesh fences, and windows reflecting sky and trees.

I was very comfortable with the suggestions in a Parks and Wildlife Service pamphlet suggesting how to make life safer for Swift Parrots. There are not too many fast moving vehicles along our gravelled road, no tennis courts with wire mesh fences, and I loved the idea of leaving my windows dirty so they wouldn't reflect so much sky and bush. In spite of my neglect, one December day there came a sickening thump on the sitting room window. My son raced out to see what caused the noise, and found a small, bright green parrot sitting on the path. He picked it up, and it bit him, so he let go. It flew into a

nearby acacia and sat still. I had responded to cries of "Mum!" and came to see. Ran in for my camera, took a few shots, moving closer for each one. The little fellow, a juvenile judging by its dark brown eye, moved a little further into the bush. By now the resident New Holland Honeyeaters were taking an ominous interest in the intruder, and the cat was sure to be somewhere nearby. My son stood guard at a little distance while I ran in to phone the Nature Conservation Branch of our State Department of Primary Industries, Water and Environment. The person answering knew her stuff. "Drop a cloth over it, put it in a box and we will contact a Wildlife Rehabilitation Carer." I did as instructed and soon a return call came, telling me to take the little bird to Lesley.

I was already acquainted with Lesley. She is a special person, who has designed her house with animal rehabilitation and occupation in mind, having piddle-friendly floors and a fenced enclosure for native animals instead of a herb and flower garden outside the back door. She always seems to have one or another marsupial at her heels, although she now specialises in rehabilitating seabirds; anything from a Little Penguin to an Albatross. This is a labour of love for Lesley, as it is for over a hundred other Tasmanians who care for our sick and injured wildlife.

A few weeks later I caught up with Lesley, and got the rest of the story. It was good, at least for us if not for the young parrot. It had survived and its condition had not deteriorated in her care. Because it was an Endangered bird it was taken to Hobart for veterinary assessment. An X-ray was decided against as birds can be susceptible to damage. It was thought to have a badly bruised breastbone, but not a break. Bruising there would be enough to halt flight. Time would heal, and in the meantime our bird was taken to a rehabilitation centre in a suitable habitat outside Hobart. Soft release is practised there, meaning that the birds are free to go from the cages when they are fit, but to return for food and roosting as long as they require.

Because our bird had been reared naturally in the wild it was proposed to house and release it with some other injured Swift Parrots. It is usually preferred to release rehabilitated birds in the area they came from, so they can rejoin their own family/social group, but this can only be done if they are fit and healthy by January. At this time they leave the breeding areas and move off to the northwest of Tasmania. As they cross the state they find inland and sub-alpine eucalypt species coming into blossom. Nectar and probably insects from these trees builds them up until they leave for their Wintering grounds on the mainland.

This year, the Blue Gums are resting. There is hardly a blossom to be seen in the big trees fringing the shoreline across the road. One morning in late September I heard the high-pitched call of Swift Parrots. I dashed outside, in time to see a group of 4 or 5 birds streaking by like the occasional RAAF jets that cross our skies. But they didn't stop, and I haven't heard them again. It will be a lean year for them, with little chance of a good feed anywhere in Tasmania's South East. Even if they managed to rear a good number of young during last year's bumper season many will lost this year as they move in to the dangerous suburbs for their sustenance. Already there is news of a small flock having flown into a truck on a highway.

So when the survivors get back to you in Bendigo in Autumn, look after them for us. Let your windows get grimy and go out and replant your garden. Maybe take out shrubs and trees planted between 3 and 12 metres from your windows, and plant some new ones. Plantings less than 3 metres from a window, in which birds might come to rest or feed might help in two ways. 1. Being near to glass might help birds detect and identify it. 2. If birds take off towards the window they won't have reached lethal velocity if they strike glass. If you own the land more than 12 metres away plant some trees on it (it will also need to be 12 metres from the neighbours).Trees at this distance are probably less likely to reflect in the windows, though this will depend on the size of both.

When you have done that, take your binoculars out to the forests and see how many Swift Parrots are about and if you can see any banded birds. Report any sightings to your local Department of Natural Resources and Environment office. If you find a banded bird, please contact The Australian Bird and Bat Banding Scheme (ABBBS), GPO Box 8, CANBERRA ACT 2601, Telephone (02) 62742407 Facsimile (02) 62742455 or Email: abbbs@ea.gov.au. Around a hundred have been banded, but because they have very short tarsi (lower legs) the bands could be difficult to see.

Not to mention the birds.....they aren't called Swift Parrots for want of a better name!

Acknowledgements and References

Raymond Brereton and Stephen Mallick - past and present Swift Parrot Recovery Project Officers, Nature Conservation Branch, DPIWE, Tasmania

"Wingspan" Vol 12 No 6 - Chris Tzaros "Swift Flight to Recovery" pp 8 – 11

"Yellow Throat"- Birds Tas. Newsletter – "Window/building design criteria to prevent bird strikes" -reprint from article by Paul M Nealen PhD Biology Department, University of Pennsylvania 2002

"Swift Parrot Recovery Plan" – Swift Parrot Recovery Team 2001.Department of Primary Industries, Water and Environment, Hobart

Article compiled and contributed by Ruth Brozek of Eaglehawk Neck, Tasmania.
Ruth owns and operates Tasman Nature Guiding (www.tasnatureguiding.com.au), providing personal guiding for small groups of birders and others interested in the world of nature.

70 Old Jetty Rd
Eaglehawk Neck
Tas 7179
Australia

Phone: +61 (0)3 6250 3268
Email: brozek@southcom.com.au
Website: www.tasnatureguiding.com.au

Volunteers needed

Volunteer research assistants required for study of a rare bird species in Australian coastal heathland. I am a Ph.D. student with Melbourne University studying the habitat ecology and breeding behaviour of the southern emu-wren. The emu-wren is one of Australia's smallest and most secretive birds. I require assistance with mist-netting and banding birds, observing pairs and their habitat use, finding nests, and carrying out insect and botanical surveys. The study is conducted at two heathland sites, both situated in Portland, far west Victoria. Food and accommodation are supplied and assistants are required from mid November 2002 to mid February 2003. Commitment for one month or more is preferable.

If you are interested in the position, please contact Grainne Maguire at s.maguire@pgrad.unimelb.edu.au or phone (03) 5521 7770 after 8pm weekdays.

WRIN news

by Garry Cheers, President,
Wildlife Rescue & Information Network

On behalf of the Wildlife Rescue & Information Network, Inc [WRIN], could I take this opportunity to thank the Bendigo Field Naturalists for always including the WRIN wildlife rescue number in the Whirrakee - always an interesting read - the write up is very important to us as we would find it impossible to pay for advertising as well as all the other expenses incurred in keeping the organisation going [rescue phone, insurance and all the other expenses]. Because my work has taken me away from home for a large amount of the year, Brenda and I have found it impossible to attend meetings, something we both regret as you have had, as always, some excellent speakers talking on a very interesting variety of subjects. May be next year we'll have more time. We both hope so.

On Saturday April 5th next year [2003], WRIN will be having the 'bat lady' herself, Lindy Lumsden coming to Bendigo to give a talk on her favourite subject. The talk will start after the WRIN meeting which commences at 1pm and will be at your club rooms. I'm sure I don't have to write up any details on Lindy, I think you all know her well. We will be charging $2 per person to help cover costs. Tea and coffee will be available after the talk

October General Meeting: Speaker Neil Marriot, Topic: Grevillea Hunting in Australia

by Sabine Wilkens

The genus *Grevillea* is the third largest genus in Australia (do you know which ones are number one and two?). There are at least 500 species of *Grevillea* and some are not yet described or, as Neil keeps finding out, not yet discovered!
For example, on a recent trip to Western Australia, Neil and his partner Peter Old, returned with 6 new species and last year they found 10 new ones as well as a new Banksia!

How did this Gevillea passion come about?
Neil began his 'career' as a field naturalist in the Mornington Peninsula with the Frankston club. He fell in love with the local geology, birds and insects and through bird observing became interested in plants. Grevilleas are wonderful for attracting honeyeaters and when Neil began to establish his garden at Black Range in the Grampians, he continued collecting grevilleas, first in Victoria, then interstate and then internationally. Many examples were mentioned while showing some wonderful slides:

From Victoria, *Grevillea aquifolium* is a very variable species. Neil told us that the Grampians are the evolutionary centre of this species and it has developed into many different forms, in the Bendigo region, the coast and elsewhere.
G. alpina is similarly variable, the grampians form being quite different-looking to our local form (even the Mt Ida form is quite different to the Bendigo form).
Many grevilleas occur very localised. The reasons for this are unknown but an example is *G. barklyana*. This is only found along a creek in the Bunyip State forest east of Melbourne. Its entire Victorian distribution would not be more than 50ha (it also has a patchy distribution in NSW).
Neil is also able to grow some interesting and rare interstate grevilleas. From South Australia, for example, one endemic to the Flinders Ranges, *G. aspera* and *G. lavandulacea*, one whose survival has been threatened by the growing wine industry and associated clearing.
Many species from NSW were mentioned (*G. buxifolia*, *G. mucronulata* and *G. longifolia*, *G. speciosa* and *G. laurifolia*, and from Queensland Neil has in his garden, *G. banksii*, *G. teretifolia* and *G. parallela*. Some of these are tropical species and they need very protected spots in the garden to survive.
From the Northern Territory/Kakadu National Park area, Neil grows *G. dryandri* and *G. goodii*, *G. aurea*, *G. helicosperma* and from the Kimberleys *G. Formosa* and *G.latifolia* as well as *G. albiflora* from Central Australia....
It must be an amazing garden with such a range of microclimates to allow all these species to survive!
Two thirds of all grevilleas grow in Western Australia, the richest area being the Darling Ranges just north of Perth. There are also many rare species whose continued existence depends on the goodwill of private land holders or mining companies. In many places up to ten species coexist but they do generally do not hybridise. However, in Eastern Australia, hybirds are quite common between certain species e.g. *G. rosmarinifolia* hybridises with *G. alpina*, *G. lavandulacea* and *G. lanigera*. The culprit, *G. rosmarinifolia,* is however not the local species which has a narrow distribution north of Bendigo, it is the nursery variety which is a very popular garden plant in Bendigo. Such hybrids often exhibit so-called 'hybrid vigour' and they may represent unfair competition for the local species.
In their natural environment, the cinnamon fungus is one of Grevillea's biggest threats (as it is to the whole family Proteaceae).

Propagating and growing grevilleas is 'easy' according to Neil. Some seed needs smoke treatment to germinate. Most species grow from cuttings but even from seed, once you get the technique right, it is easy! Plenty of sunshine, perfect drainage and acid soils are important prerequistes (but I still think you need a lot of talent!)
Many grevilleas are bird-pollinated and it is not necessarily only red ones! *G. mucronulata*, for example, has green flowers. Perhaps to compensate for the hard-to-spot flowers, they have loads of nectar which attracts birds. Other pollinators are bees, beetles and night-flying moths, the latter agents usually go for strong smelling species. Neil has a great variety of grevilleas in his garden, some are bird pollinated and some are insect pollinated. The danger with only growing bird pollinated species, is that one might end up with a garden full of aggressive large honeyeaters and nothing else.
Thank you very much Neil for a very entertaining talk and for sharing some of the secrets of your amazing garden with us.

VFNCA March Long Weekend Camp March 7 – 11, 2003
Urban Camp Melbourne

Expression of Interest Registration Form
Please circulate widely

Draft Program subject to change. Prices are approximate at this time.

Friday	Afternoon – Bureau of Meteorology Training Centre, Broadmeadows Registration from 4pm at Urban Camp Evening – Welcome, Speaker
Saturday	Full Day - Zoo and behind the scenes approximately $13 Evening – VFNCA AGM 5 pm, Speaker from Zoo.
Sunday	Optional - Aquarium and brief behind scenes approximately $17 and/or Point Cook Wetlands Evening – general meeting if necessary. Speaker
Monday	Botanical Gardens with Friends of the Gardens Evening – Speaker
Tuesday	Morning – Museum of Victoria – behind the scenes and self-guided museum tour approximately $15

Accommodation
Urban Camp – Fully Catered, shared rooms. Approximately $50.00 per day per person
Located in Royal Park, parking available. Public Transport to most venues close by.

A letter with final details will be sent in early January to those who have registered.
Final payment will be due at the end of January.

A deposit of $20.00 per person is required with the expression of interest. Payment made payable by cash/cheque at Ballarat campout or cheque by post. Cheques to be made payable to BFNC Camp Account.

Enquires to Rob and Glenise Moors Ph 03 54396254 or email clachan@impulse.net.au

Please complete below and send deposit prior to 13th December

---

Expression of interest - VFNCA Camp March 7 – 11, 2003.

Names_____

Address_____

Phone _____ Email _____ Club_____

Payment of_____

Return to: Rob and Glenise Moors
555 Mandurang South Rd
RSD STRATHFIELDSAYE
Victoria 3551